

## ***Roto-Rooter* Keeps Your Drains Free Flowing**

Most homeowners and restaurant managers rarely think about their drains until one stops flowing. Then they must decide to remedy the situation by calling a plumber, attempting to clear the drain using a plunger or utilizing a chemical clog remover.

***Roto-Rooter's*** plumbers will have the necessary training and equipment to remove the obstruction. Most everyone has a plunger on hand, but rarely does a plunger remove stubborn clogs, and a plumber's snake can be tricky to use for the inexperienced. Chemical clog removers work well on minor clogs and are relatively inexpensive, but they can be dangerous to people and property.

### **Chemical Drain Openers**

Just as the name implies, chemical drain openers work via a chemical reaction. They may include sulfuric or hydrochloric acids, or caustic ingredients such as lye, sodium hydroxide or caustic soda, and may be in liquid or granular form. The chemical nature of these products may generate heat that could soften PVC, damage older pipes, corrode steel or aluminum, or crack porcelain. Unexpected results such as splash back and toxic vapors are harmful to anyone in the area. Chemical drain openers may remain in your piping system, causing injury or property damage when the pipe is opened for cleaning.

Chemical drain openers do not always clear the blockage and the pipe may need to be retreated. Under no circumstances should a different chemical drain opener be introduced into a previously treated line as the combination of acids or caustic ingredients may cause a serious chemical reaction.

Chemical drain openers are corrosive and dangerous, and should be used with caution. Protective gear, including gloves and safety goggles, should be worn when using chemical drain openers, and care should be taken to avoid inhaling the fumes. If the drain opener fails to clear the line and a professional plumber is called in, explain steps already taken and mention products added so that proper steps may be taken to ensure the plumber's safety and reduce the risk of property damage.

### **Drain Maintenance & Biological (Bacterial) Cleaners**

There is no sure way to keep a drain from clogging. Food waste, grease, soap scum, hair and other organic materials build up on the inside of the pipes over time, eventually becoming a clog that slows or stops the drain. But steps can be taken to prevent clogs from reoccurring quickly. Specially formulated biological treatments can be applied to help keep drains free flowing longer.

Biological cleaners contain specialized bacteria strains that thrive in drain lines, grease traps and septic tanks. These bacterial cultures are specifically created to eat organic debris such as fats, starches, protein, grease, fiber and other food waste found in drain lines. The digestive-type reactions keep waste from building up inside the pipes, but typically do not work to remove clogs. Biological (bacterial) drain treatments introduce natural bacteria into the drain to feed on the organic matter and convert them into harmless by-products (carbon dioxide and water). Such products are environmentally safe and contain no acids, caustic ingredients or harmful chemicals. Biological (bacterial) cleaners will not harm drains—PVC, copper or iron—they reduce odors and are safe for all drains and drain lines.

Biological (bacterial) cleaners typically require an overnight application, during which time the drain line should not be used so that the bacteria can establish colonies inside the pipe. Monthly maintenance applications replenish the bacteria that may have washed away and allow the colonies to continue their work. Bleach, disinfectants, solvents and other chemicals should not be introduced into the line as they may harm the colonies and reduce their effectiveness.

### **Enzymatic Cleaners**

Enzymatic cleaners utilize a chemical catalyst to convert organic waste from solid form to liquid form in order to move the material through the pipe. The waste material returns to its original form. Unlike biological (bacterial) cleaners, enzymatic cleaners do not eat away organic waste. An example of this is kitchen sink soaps.

### **Automated Drain Care for Restaurant Grease Traps**

The drain lines and grease traps in kitchen, food preparation or processing areas are designed to flow at a specific rate. Even a new drain system can develop buildup problems in just a few months—to the extent that flow rates are reduced by one-half or more! Sure, you can clean the pipe—but as soon as you're done, grease and waste begin building up again.

Ongoing drain maintenance combines technology with specific bacteria strains. Using a microprocessor-controlled meter or pump, a biological cleaner is pumped into drain lines on a preprogrammed schedule. These bacteria work around the clock, consuming grease and organic waste, reducing the need for drain cleaning and grease trap pumping.

The meter injects a measured amount of biological cleaner into drain lines to replenish the biofilm washed away by the natural flow of water through the system each day. Meters are automated and utilize a battery backup system that maintains a preprogrammed schedule in the event of a power failure.

### **Control Root Growth in Pipes**

Roots from trees and shrubs frequently find their way into drain lines and sewer pipes through small cracks, holes or poorly sealed joints. These tiny root hairs—if not properly controlled—will continue to grow inside the lines, blocking water flow and even causing the pipes to break. A **Roto-Rooter** service technician has the proper training and equipment to cut through root blockages and restore water flow. Once the roots are removed, a treatment **of Roto-Rooter Root Destroyer** may be necessary to retard re-growth. A twice-a-year application of this root control product will kill the roots growing into the pipes but will not affect the plant or the rest of its root system.

### **Special Treatment for Sugar Residue**

Specially formulated biological products are available to safely and effectively break down “sugar snake,” or the cellulose buildup in beverage tower drink lines or any lines where high sugar/carbohydrate food substrates are created or processed. Regular use eliminates unnecessary backups and unpleasant odors caused by the hard-to-remove buildup created by sugar/carbohydrate materials.

### **Urinal Blocks**

Urinal blocks are an effective and economical tool for public facilities. A great working urinal block will contain fragrance for deodorizing purposes plus healthy bacteria that eliminates the calcium buildup inside drain lines. Calcium buildup can be as solid as concrete and may have to be chiseled out of the line. Another good urinal block feature is a screen trap to stop debris from entering the drain line.

## Simple Prevention Steps

A few preventive measures will reduce the chance of drain line blockages:

- Avoid pouring grease into any drain line.
- Ensure that all sinks and floor drains have strainers to keep debris from entering the line. Clean strainers regularly.
- Do not discard food, paper, utensils, dishes, gloves, feminine hygiene products, etc. in sinks, toilets or floor drains.
- Ensure that trash cans are available in restrooms to keep family members, guests and employees from disposing of improper waste in toilets and sinks.
- Do not use chlorine bleach, disinfectants, solvents or harsh chemicals in drain lines.
- Pour hot water directly into all drains once a week to help keep drains flowing freely. Do not pour water onto porcelain as it may crack.

The key to free-flowing drains is preventive maintenance. Biological (bacterial) treatments and attention to problem areas can reduce buildup on the inside of the pipes and ensure that your drains remain free flowing longer.

### Is Roto-Rooter's Pipe Defense really **GREEN**?



Everyone seems to be jumping on the 'green' bandwagon these days. In our line of work, taking a green approach seemed to just make sense as we deal with water every day. We can be committed to conserving water and help prevent contamination in our fresh water supplies.

Whether you are committed to the principles of environmental stewardship, or if you have given little thought to your lifestyle's impact on the environment, this article should cause you to think about how you could make different choices to lessen your negative impact on the environment. **Roto-Rooter** is doing their part by beginning our green initiative and we are reducing our carbon footprint by officially declaring our **Pipe-Defense** product as '**Green.**' **Help Roto-Rooter help the environment ~ Go GREEN, Go ROTOGreen!**

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